

Kentucky Teacher

OCTOBER 2000

Board reviews student accountability proposal

By **Faun S. Fishback**
Kentucky Department of Education

For years, Kentucky teachers have been asking for a way to make students more accountable for how they perform on state-required assessments. With the Kentucky Core Content Tests developed to measure school performance and not individual student performance, student accountability has been a hard issue to address.

However, a proposal discussed by the Kentucky Board of Education at its October meeting received favorable consideration. The proposal would establish a policy providing local school districts the option of using individual high school students' results on the Kentucky Core Content Tests in reading, mathematics, science and social studies and their scores on writing portfolios to increase individual grade point averages (GPA) by as much as 3 percent.

The proposal, drafted by board member Craig True of Fort Thomas, has been reviewed and is supported by the National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability, a panel of experts that advises the board on testing issues. The board members asked Department of Education staff to review the proposal with superintendents, district assessment coordinators, principals, teachers and parents over the next month and report to the board at its December meeting.

The proposed policy would:

- be optional to school districts. Districts could require that all high schools participate or permit school councils to determine whether or not a school participates.

- be a factor in the overall high school GPA of students. It would be no more than 3 percent of the student's

maximum possible GPA.

- have an impact on a student's GPA in that it can only add to the GPA.

Weights would be established for novice, apprentice, proficient and dis-

tinguished according to a district's grading scale. For example, if a school district operates on a 0 to 4.0 scale, the weight for a novice score would be 0.000; for apprentice, 0.008; for pro-



LEARNING TOGETHER — Students gather 'round as Kentucky Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit leads a learning activity during a visit to Whitney Young Elementary in Jefferson County. Later in his visit, Wilhoit made a surprise presentation to teacher Mary Robertson, one of three Kentucky teachers to win this year's prestigious Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award. For details, see Page 6.

ficient, 0.016; and for distinguished, 0.024. On that scale, the maximum credit assigned from the core content tests in grades 10 and 11 and the 12th-grade writing portfolio would be 0.12 points (five distinguished scores weighted at 0.024 each). The student's credit for achievement in CATS would be added to the GPA as determined by the local district policy. (See table on Page 3.)

The impact on the overall GPAs, although minor to many students, gives students ownership in their performance on the core content tests and writing portfolios. In some cases, the impact could be big. If Sample Students 1 and 2 (see table) were tied for valedictorian, for example, performance on the state assessments would give Sample Student 1 the honor. Likewise, if a local school board has a policy that a student must have a GPA of 2.0 to graduate, Student 5's performance on the state tests may allow that student to graduate.

"This is as good or better than any proposal brought forth so far," said Benny Lile, chair of the Student Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council.

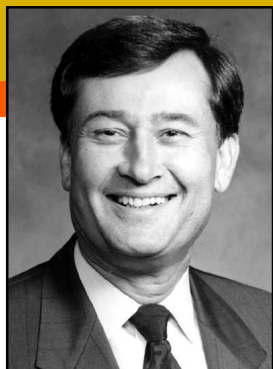
John Poggio, a member of the national technical panel, said the panel feels the policy has many pluses for student accountability. He also advised the board to make certain that the policy is evaluated and monitored for fairness and equity.

Other actions

In other action, the board:

- discussed a request by the Kentucky Department of Education to allow the department to extend contracts with designated highly skilled educators (HSEs), with the approval and consent of that HSE's superintendent.

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Commissioner's Comments

'Getting to Proficiency' is more than a goal; it's our mission

By Gene Wilhoit,
Commissioner of Education

You probably haven't heard of the Department of Education's newest initiative — yet — but I think you will soon be as excited about it as we are.

We're calling the initiative "Getting to Proficiency." If you're an educator in a Kentucky public school, you may be thinking, "What's new about getting to proficiency? That's been our goal since 1990, when the legislature launched our new public education system."

True. Educators, students, parents, community leaders and others have been working long and hard to get all schools to proficiency by the year 2014. Here at the department, we've been working hard, too, and we will continue to do so. The difference is, from now on, we'll be working *smarter* and

with a new focus.

In 1990, the legislature gave the Department of Education the obligation and opportunity to reinvent itself. The Kentucky Education Reform Act abolished the department, which until that time was regulatory in nature, and established a new department to serve and support districts and schools.

During the past 10 years, dedicated people at the local and state levels, working together, have made tremendous progress in education. Our students are learning at higher levels. While all of us can be proud of how far we've come, we can't escape the fact that we must work harder and smarter, and improve faster, to reach proficiency by 2014. That's the goal we have set for ourselves in the new testing system.

For the past several months, I have had the good fortune to team up with

others on the department's efforts to find ways to work harder and smarter and improve faster. Under the banner "Getting to Proficiency," we are making changes to become more responsive to local challenges and needs, more service oriented, more flexible in our work with schools and districts. We are setting a new course of leadership to ensure that every school knows how to tap the power of the public education system we all began building 10 years ago.

With the goal of getting to proficiency, the department has a stronger sense of direction and purpose. We are focusing all the department's energies and resources on helping schools and districts join in that purpose, share that excitement, and improve teaching and learning for all students.

"Getting to Proficiency" is already changing the way we do business at

the department. I think it already is having a positive impact on employees here and many of the schools and districts they serve. That impact will spread to every aspect of public education, from the department's own employees to each student in the state. Those students, of course, are why we do what we do. I promise you: the Kentucky Department of Education is going to be the kind of partner, and the kind of leader, that schools and districts need to make getting to proficiency a reality for every student.

To learn more about the Department of Education's "Getting to Proficiency" initiative, phone Debbie Schumacher, Director of the Division of Extended Learning, at (502) 564-7056, or inquire by e-mail to dschumac@kde.state.ky.us.

Wilhoit to tour Kentucky 'with open ears, open mind'

Within days of being named Kentucky's commissioner of education, Gene Wilhoit was planning eight trips. His destinations: The Department of Education's eight service regions. His mission: To meet and listen to every person who wants to talk about improving public education.

Wilhoit, who on Oct. 1 became the third commissioner since passage of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, wants to know what people think about the public education system as it is now and what they want the system to be in the future. His first step toward that goal is a series of eight public forums, all scheduled for November.

"I'm eager to open up the lines of communication," Wilhoit said. "I want

to be aware of issues and concerns, and I want the commissioner's office to be accessible to all stakeholders. I'm going to keep my ears and my mind open throughout the statewide tour and throughout my term as commissioner."

The Kentucky Board of Education will issue invitations. Invited participants include representatives of several target audiences:

- Legislators and other elected state and local officials
- Business community and chambers of commerce
- Editorial boards
- Education coalition groups
- Superintendents and local school board members
- Principals and school-based

council members

- Teachers
- Parents
- Students
- General public

Wilhoit and the state board hope that sending invitations will ensure broad representation at the forums. However, invitations are not required. Everyone is welcome to participate.

State board members will host the forums from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. local time in the following locations:

Region 1: Nov. 15, Curris Center, Murray State University

Region 2: Nov. 21, University Hotel and Conference Center, Bowling Green

Region 3: Nov. 14, Gheens Profes-

sional Development Center, Louisville

Region 4: Nov. 27, Deitz Auditorium, Erlanger-Elsmere Schools, Erlanger

Region 5: Nov. 28, Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington

Region 6: Nov. 29, The Center for Rural Community Development, Somerset

Region 7: Nov. 30, Plaza Hotel, Ashland

Region 8: Nov. 9, Pikeville High School auditorium

For more information about the forums, call the Department of Education's Information Line toll-free at (800) 535-5372.

Hearing on three regulations scheduled for Nov. 21

At its meeting in October, the Kentucky Board of Education took action on several regulations that would affect teachers and schools. The board scheduled public hearings for 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 21, in the State Board Room in Frankfort to gather comments on the following proposed regulations:

- **704 KAR 3:490** creates the Teachers' Professional Growth Fund, which provides \$750,000 this school year and \$1.25 million in 2001-2002 to provide high-quality professional development in content knowledge and teaching methods for middle school mathematics teachers. Individual teachers can qualify for \$2,500 in professional development funds each fiscal year. Eventually, the fund will be available to teachers at all grade levels in all content areas.

- **702 KAR 1:150** establishes procedures school districts must follow to obtain approval from the commissioner of education to employ a retired teacher in a critical shortage area.

- **702 KAR 7:125** amends the pu-

pil attendance regulation to allow participation in Kentucky Virtual High School courses off-site to be included in average daily attendance. The amendment also sets July 1, 2000, as the date to implement new ethnic and race codes required on federal reports and clarifies conditions under which school districts may request disaster days.

The text of these proposed regulations and amendments can be found on the Department of Education Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us/legal/hearings.asp.

The hearing on Nov. 21 is open to the public. Individuals who are interested in commenting at the hearing should notify the Kentucky Department of Education no later than Nov. 14. All requests to speak at the hearing or to submit written comments should be sent to Associate Commissioner Kevin M. Noland, Office of Legal Services, Department of Education, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601. The fax number is (502) 564-9321.

Most students say they take CATS seriously

Ninety-seven percent of surveyed 16- and 17-year-old Kentucky high school students say they "do their best" or "try" on Kentucky Core Content Tests. Only 3 percent of the students responded "I don't try at all."

The Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center conducted the survey, which included 39 questions about education-related topics. The center released the survey results on October 11.

For an overview of student responses to the questions, visit www.kltprc.net/pressreleases/pr_CATS.htm.

Test Scores and GPAs

Potential Impact of Core Content Test and Writing Portfolio Scores on Student GPA (0 to 4.0 Scale)

| | Student 1 | Student 2 | Student 3 | Student 4 | Student 5 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| GPA | 4.000 | 4.000 | 2.000 | 3.250 | 1.990 |
| Reading | D=0.024 | P=0.016 | D=0.024 | N=0.000 | D=0.024 |
| Mathematics | D=0.024 | P=0.016 | A=0.008 | N=0.000 | P=0.016 |
| Science | D=0.024 | P=0.016 | A=0.008 | N=0.000 | P=0.016 |
| Social Studies | D=0.024 | P=0.016 | N=0.000 | N=0.000 | A=0.008 |
| Writing Portfolios | D=0.024 | P=0.016 | D=0.024 | N=0.000 | D=0.024 |
| Adjusted GPA | 4.120 | 4.080 | 2.064 | 3.250 | 2.088 |

Figures are based on these weights outlined in a proposal reviewed by the Kentucky Board of Education: distinguished, 0.024; proficient, 0.016; apprentice, 0.008; novice, 0.000. The maximum credit assigned from the core content tests in grades 10 and 11 and the writing portfolio in grade 12 would be 0.12 points (five distinguished-level scores weighted at 0.024 each).

Board

Continued from Page 1

Currently, contracts are limited to two years. The board will revisit the request at its December meeting.

- reviewed information about dropout rates and local district requirements for handling dropouts. By Dec. 30 the board must develop a "comprehensive statewide strategy to provide assistance to local school districts and schools to address the student dropout problem," as directed by House Bill 77 passed during the 2000 General Assembly.

- received a report from the Minority Student Achievement Task Force with its recommendations to improve achievement of African-American students throughout Kentucky. Targeted schools in six districts (Jefferson, Fayette and Hardin counties and Paducah, Owensboro and Bardstown independents) will pilot a plan that could be used in all districts to remove barriers to im-

proved minority student achievement.

- approved a notice of intent to amend a new section of a Kentucky regulation that sets new criteria and requirements for the process of evaluating certified personnel. The board's amendments would change some definitions, add a requirement for provision of resources to accomplish goals set in the professional growth plan, establish a new condition for providing an additional observer of a teacher who can provide input to the primary evaluator, and establish new evaluation criteria, including the Experienced Teacher Standards.

- created an oversight committee for the Kentucky School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf. Board members Keith Travis, Alcie Combs and Paul Whalen will serve on the committee. Travis will chair the committee.

Riley praises Kentucky's improvements in education

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley called for support for teachers and continued commitment to the nation's public schools during a keynote address at the U.S. Department of Education's 7th Annual Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools in Louisville Oct. 2-4.

Riley praised the people of Kentucky and Gov. Paul Patton for the

state's "tireless work" toward improving the quality of education and access to opportunity for all children.

"Education remains our number



U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley

one priority," Riley said, "and we will push hard until the end of the administration."

He specifically addressed school modernization legislation now before Congress and professional development for teachers.

"Quality teachers are the heart and soul of education reform," Riley said.

Louisville was one of three conference sites. The others were Sacramento and Washington, D.C. Educators and partners had the opportunity to learn about federal programs, resources, research and funding opportunities.

Rewards for academic progress go to 618 Kentucky schools

There was good news for many Kentucky schools with the release of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System's (CATS) interim accountability results in Sep-

tember. The statewide accountability indices rose slightly in all grade levels — elementary, middle and high — from 1998-99 to 1999-2000, the cycle during which Kentucky made the tran-

sition from its old testing system to CATS.

This year, 618 Kentucky schools will share rewards because they met or exceeded their goals. The schools will learn later this fall how much of \$23 million in reward money each will receive. The school-based decision making council in each school will decide how reward money will be spent.

There were 421 schools whose scores classified them as maintaining performance. These schools did not meet, exceed or fall below their expected performance goals. They will not receive rewards or special assistance for improvement from the state.

Another 149 schools fell below their expected performance levels and are eligible for Commonwealth School Improvement Funds and varying degrees of assistance. Of these, the 49 schools in the bottom third of the assistance category will receive direct assistance in October and November from a scholastic audit team. An audit team will spend time in each of the 49 schools to determine where the school needs help and whether it needs the assistance of a highly skilled educator.

"With the release of these scores, we mark the end of our transition between the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System and CATS," Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit said. "This interim accountability model worked just as the National Technical Advisory Panel of experts told us it would to maintain accountability for school improvement while making the transition from the old testing system to the new."

The state indices for the interim show that schools posted increases in all content areas, except for middle school practical living/vocational studies and high school writing. Compared to the proficiency goal of 100 on the 140-point accountability scale, elementary students scored highest in reading at 76.9 with 32 percent scoring proficient or distinguished and 33 percent scoring high apprentice.

Middle school students showed their highest achievement in math-

ematics and reading with a 70.6 and 67.7, respectively. Nearly 12 percent of the 7th-graders taking the reading test scored proficient or distinguished. In mathematics, 15.5 percent of the 8th-graders scored distinguished, 21.7 percent scored proficient and 11.7 percent scored high apprentice.

Reading, at 69.9, and mathematics, at 68.3, were also the areas of highest achievement for high school students. Of the 10th-graders who took the reading test, 32.5 percent scored proficient or distinguished and 20.2 percent scored high apprentice. In mathematics, 33.8 percent of the 11th-graders who took the test scored proficient or distinguished and 19.5 scored high apprentice.

Statewide, the dropout rate decreased from 5.4 percent to 4.9 percent. Commissioner Wilhoit attributed the half-percent decline to the new dropout requirements in the interim accountability model. A school cannot receive rewards during the interim unless its dropout rate is below 8 percent.

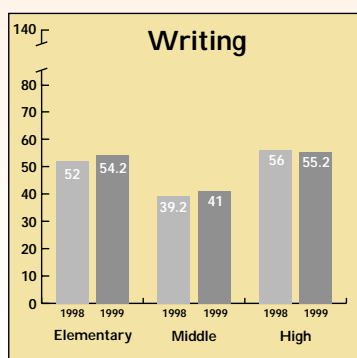
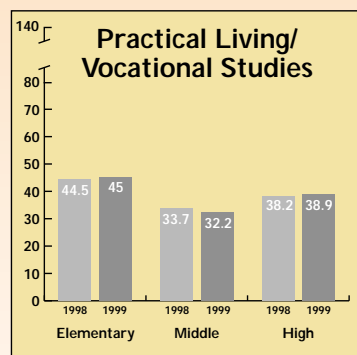
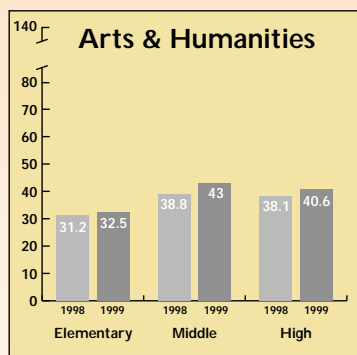
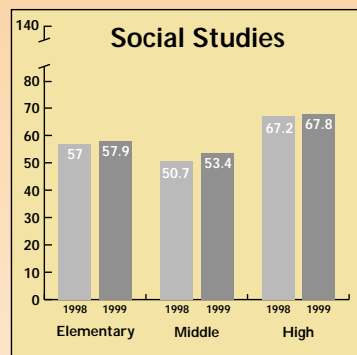
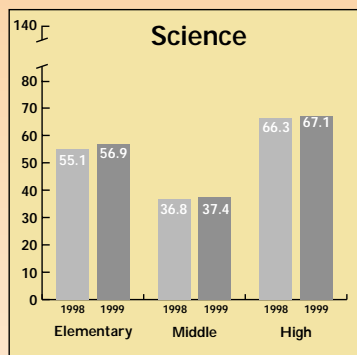
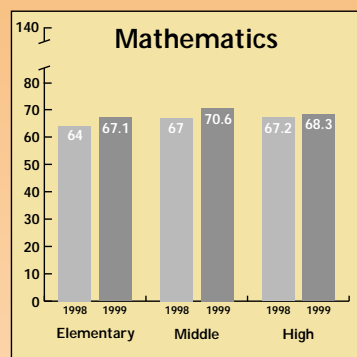
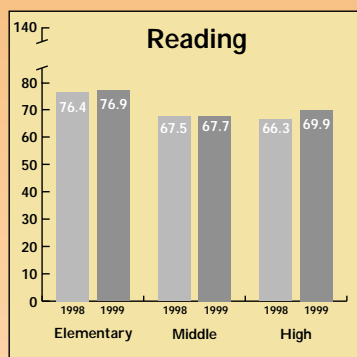
This testing cycle, seven schools that would have earned rewards on an academic basis did not receive rewards because they failed to meet the dropout requirement.

"Kentucky public schools are generally heading in the right direction as we shift our attention to the long-term accountability system," Wilhoit added.

Long-term accountability begins April 23-May 4, the window for administering the 2001 Kentucky Core Content Tests. This summer, each Kentucky school will receive its own customized growth chart that depicts the academic growth that school must make to reach the statewide goal of proficiency by 2014. That chart will show each school its baseline, or starting point, from which its progress will be measured beginning in the 2001-02 biennium.

District, school, regional and state scores, non-academic data (attendance, dropout, retention and successful transition to adult life rates) and background information are available on the department's Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.

Statewide Academic Indices: 1998-99 and 1999-2000



We've got our school's scores. Now what?

If your school's copy of the "Kentucky Performance Report" is already gathering dust in the principal's office, go get it! That report is key to improving student academic achievement in the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System. It's a key that unlocks student progress whether your school is high-performing, maintaining or low-performing.

All Kentucky districts received their school reports when test scores for the interim accountability period were released in September. Each school report contains student data collected from the tests.

"When administrators and teachers sit down and review the data for their students together, it generates all sorts of discussions about curriculum and instruction," said Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit. "Because of the breadth of data, schools can plan content-specific instructional strategies for individual students' needs as well as the entire student population."

The report includes data by gender, ethnicity and disability. Schools receive data on student performance in particular programs. Individual student performance by content area also is included in the report. "Teachers can make decisions about what instructional strategies to use in a subject based on the needs identified through their analysis of test results," Wilhoit added.

While many Kentucky schools are conducting thorough reviews of the "Kentucky Performance Report," some still are not. In a survey conducted in 1999 in conjunction with administration of the Kentucky Core Content Tests, 49 percent of the more than 13,400 teachers responding said they wanted more information and/or training in using assessment results to guide instruction.

This survey is conducted each spring and targets teachers in assessment grades — 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12. In 1999, the last year for which results are available, 78.2 percent of the targeted teachers responded to the 77-question survey.

Teachers responded to demographic questions and answered ques-

tions in five areas: teaching influences, teaching strategies, student activities, professional development issues, and information and training issues. Results are reported as typical for a classroom in the 1999 school year:

- Sixty-two percent of elementary teachers—compared to 53 percent of middle school teachers and 41 percent of high school teachers—considered released items/worksheets from previous state assessments a "primary influence" or "important influence, but others are more important" in their teaching.

- The three skills for which teachers most frequently indicated they "need additional guidance" or are "not able to use because (they) have had no training" are using technology to enhance student learning (30 percent), meeting the learning needs of students with disabilities (29 percent) and developing standards-based units of study (27 percent).

- Six percent of elementary teachers, 7 percent of middle school teachers and 11 percent of high school

teachers indicated they need additional training or have had no training on using open-response questions for assessment in the classroom. Two-thirds of the Kentucky Core Content Tests is based on open-response questions.

- Thirty-five percent of all teachers responding feel they do not have adequate opportunities to meet regularly with other teachers in their schools to share ideas and materials.

For more information about the survey, contact Dollena Hawkins, Validation and Research Division, at (502) 564-9853 or by e-mail at dhawkins@kde.state.ky.us.

Watch future issues of *Kentucky Teacher* for a comparison of teacher responses on the 1999 and 2000 Kentucky Core Content teacher survey.

| Professional Development Issues* | | Percent of Teachers Strongly Agreeing (SA) or Agreeing (A) with Statement | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|-----|-----------------|-----|----------------|-----|-------|-----|
| | | Elementary (P1-5) | | Middle (6-8) | | High (9-12) | | All** | |
| | | SA | A | SA | A | SA | A | SA | A |
| Statement | | | | | | | | | |
| The curriculum, instruction, and classroom assessments of this school are aligned with Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment. | | 46% | 43% | 47% | 48% | 38% | 57% | 44% | 51% |
| In this school, textbooks and other materials are selected on the basis of how well they support our school's learning objectives. | | 52% | 40% | 44% | 48% | 37% | 55% | 44% | 49% |
| The teachers and the principal of this school thoroughly review and analyze the state test results to plan instructional program modifications. | | 43% | 43% | 40% | 49% | 32% | 54% | 38% | 50% |
| Teachers in this school serve as models of life-long learners and demonstrate an enthusiasm for teaching their content area. | | 38% | 53% | 30% | 62% | 26% | 66% | 31% | 62% |
| Teachers in this school provide students with activities that develop critical thinking skills. | | 30% | 58% | 25% | 68% | 21% | 71% | 25% | 67% |
| This school provides parents with opportunities to participate in activities related to my content area (e.g., curriculum committees, standard-setting committees, assessment studies, family math sessions, writing portfolio demonstrations, science fair, etc.). | | 29% | 49% | 21% | 53% | 19% | 50% | 23% | 51% |
| In this school, professional development needs in my content area are identified by reviewing student performance and priorities for improvement. | | 27% | 52% | 19% | 54% | 15% | 50% | 20% | 53% |
| I expect all of my students to do well on the new CATS tests. | | 24% | 41% | 22% | 46% | 20% | 51% | 22% | 47% |
| Follow-up assistance (e.g., materials and coaching) is provided through this school and/or district for implementing skills learned in professional development activities. | | 18% | 54% | 15% | 57% | 15% | 55% | 16% | 57% |
| In this school, adoption of new materials, texts, and strategies is accompanied by sustained professional development. | | 24% | 48% | 19% | 50% | 17% | 47% | 20% | 49% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Professional development provides opportunities for articulation across grades. | 18% | 58% | 15% | 58% | 11% | 51% | 15% | 57% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Professional development addresses strategies for educating learners with special needs. | 15% | 55% | 14% | 57% | 12% | 57% | 14% | 57% |
| Teachers in this school have adequate opportunity to meet regularly to share ideas and materials. | | 23% | 38% | 29% | 41% | 20% | 42% | 24% | 41% |

**Questions and teacher responses from the professional development issues area of the teachers' survey conducted in conjunction with administration of the Kentucky Core Content Tests in 1999. Percents are based on more than 3,800 elementary teacher responses, more than 3,500 middle school teacher responses and more than 4,300 high school teacher responses.*

***Based on all teachers, regardless of grade of primary teaching responsibility, who gave a valid response to a particular question.*

Meet this year's Milken Award winners

Three elementary school teachers are Kentucky's newest recipients of the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award. Each receives national recognition plus a \$25,000 financial reward.

The winners are Cyndi Boggs of Grapevine Elementary, Rita Presley of Science Hill Elementary and Mary Robertson of Whitney Young Elementary. They learned of their awards on Oct. 5, when Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit and Milken Senior Vice President for Education Thomas Boysen made surprise visits to their schools.

At the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in Los Angeles next June, each will receive a check for \$25,000. There are no restrictions on the use of the award. Milken Award winners may use the money in any way they choose.

The annual award recognizes outstanding elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and other education professionals. The foundation launched the awards program in 1987. Kentucky has participated since 1993, with 35 recipients since then. This year, the foundation gave awards to 150 educators from 42 states.



Mary Robertson
*Whitney Young Elementary,
Jefferson County*

- Media/technology teacher
- 15 years of education experience
- Bachelor's degree, Eastern Illinois University; master's degree, University of Louisville
- Working toward another master's degree with a focus on instructional technology from U of L
- One of the first teachers to participate in the district's cooperative graduate program with the U of L Technology Leadership Institute



Cyndi L. Boggs
*Grapevine Elementary,
Hopkins County*

- Reading/English/language arts primary teacher
- Five years of education experience
- Bachelor's and master's degrees, Western Kentucky University
- Rank I/Administrative Certification K-12; applicant for doctoral program
- Incorporated the Character Counts character education program into the curriculum of two of the district's elementary schools



Rita Gwenn Presley
*Science Hill Elementary,
Science Hill Independent*

- Reading/English/language arts teacher and Title I Writing Resource teacher
- 14 years of education experience
- Associate's degree in arts, University of Kentucky; bachelor's and master's degrees, Eastern Kentucky University
- Served as a Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP) resource teacher for eight years

New to the 'Net—Lesson 3: The Kentucky Virtual Library: What can it do for me?

By Fran Salyers
Kentucky Department of Education

Welcome back to New to the 'Net, the series that strives to take teachers from novice to proficient in using the World Wide Web for teaching and learning. Lessons 1 and 2 introduced the Web and some of the most popular education sites; offered instruction on searching, evaluating and bookmarking; and provided opportunities to practice new skills.

In this lesson . . .

- Learn about the Kentucky Virtual Library and how to find it.
- Learn what a database is and how you and your students can use databases to do research that gets results!

The first step is to get to Lesson 3 online. You've learned at least two ways to get there:

1. Go to the Kentucky Department of Education's home page (www.kde.state.ky.us) and click on Newt, the series mascot. Then click on the Lesson 3 link.
2. If you bookmarked the New to the 'Net main page during Lesson 2, scroll through your bookmarks and select it. Then click on the Lesson 3 link.

What is the Virtual Library?

The Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL) is a real library that you enter not through a door but through your computer. It connects you with Web servers throughout the nation and puts hundreds of resources at your fingertips:

- Self-paced tutorials on how to conduct research;
- More than 30 electronic databases with close to 5,000 full-text journal and newspaper articles;
- Full-text periodicals, encyclopedias and other reference materials;
- A growing collection of online library catalogs listing nearly 10 million volumes;
- Access to interlibrary loans that bring materials you need to a university or public library near you;
- Access to historical materials held in special collections and archives

in Kentucky;

- Links to selected Web sites at the Virtual Reference Desk;

- Links to selected Web sites for K-12 teachers and students;

- And more!

All of this is available to you, free of

charge, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year, from a KETS-networked computer or from a home computer linked to the Internet via modem.

What is a database?

Simply stated, a database is an organized collection of information stored in an electronic format that is "searchable." That means a user can type in a word or phrase to find requested information (records, articles, titles, statistics) within that database.

Among the databases available through the Kentucky Virtual Library are these teacher favorites:

- **Academic Search Elite** — full text of more than 1,260 journals covering the social sciences, humanities,

general science, multicultural studies, education and more;

- **Primary Search** — full text from more than 70 children's magazines appropriate for elementary schools and

children's reading rooms;

- **NoveList** — an electronic advisory resource that helps fiction readers find new authors and titles.

Take the tutorial

Get your hands on the Kentucky Virtual Library! To begin, click on "Michele Guthrie's KYVL Tutorial" on the New to the 'Net Lesson 3 page. Michele Guthrie, a Carroll County library media specialist working as a Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) coordinator based in Covington, developed this tutorial es-

pecially for teachers.

Get your password

You will need a log-in identification ("loginID") and a password to enter some features of the Kentucky Virtual Library. KYVL managers change these access codes three times a year to coincide with the academic calendar. Obtain the codes from the library media specialist in your school or the technology coordinator in your district. Another resource is Diane Culbertson at (502) 564-7168 or dculbert@kde.state.ky.us.

Need help?

Click on the "Help" link on the Lesson 3 page to find help online, from people in your district or from the KYVL Reference Desk, which is a toll-free call away.

Reflect

Click on the "Reflect" link on the Lesson 3 page and document your responses to the questions. This documentation could be useful to you if you are taking this online course for professional development credit.

Feedback

Send comments and questions to your New to the 'Net mentor, Naomi Cornette, by e-mail at ncornett@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list) or by phone at (502) 564-7168 or (800) 533-5372.

Coming in Lesson 4 . . .

In the November issue of *Kentucky Teacher*, learn how to use the Web for boosting your content knowledge, instructional strategies, professional networking opportunities and more. Try your hand at using the Web to design and teach a lesson in your own classroom.

If you missed New to the 'Net Lessons 1 and 2 or need details about this series, go to www.kde.state.ky.us and click on Newt, the New to the 'Net mascot. If you need a printed copy of any lesson, phone (502) 564-3421 or send a request by e-mail to kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us.



Chicken

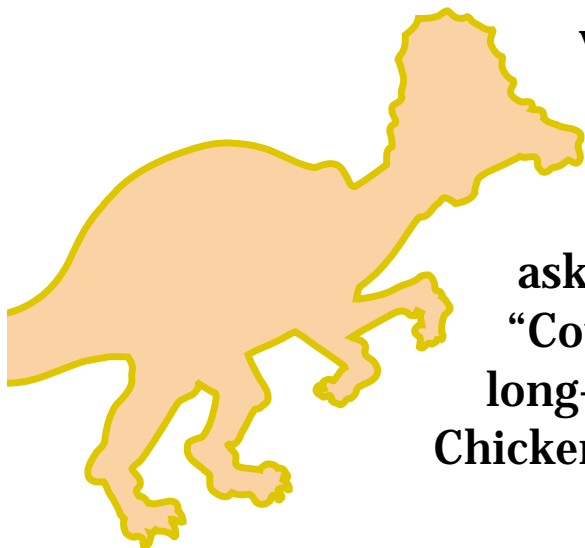
By Ron Benningfield
LaRue County Public Schools

Editor's Note: Ron Benningfield is the assistant superintendent for management support services. He also is the district's director of public relations and a member of the Kentucky School Public Relations Association.

Slowly and carefully,

like a doctor extracting a bullet a fraction of an inch from a patient's heart, the small girl brushed away tiny particles of soil from the object she was painstakingly uncovering. From bulging cheeks she released a puff of air that swirled away the last thin layer of dust, revealing the tiny sliver of white she had been seeking.

"Could this be it?" she asked herself.
"Could this be the long-lost fossil Chickenosaurus?"



To the students in Rebecca Hawkins' primary class at Hodgenville Elementary, this was a cool way of learning about paleontology *a la* Indiana Jones. To Hawkins, it was an effective end to a life science unit.

"I wanted to create a fun way for my students to study life science," Hawkins explained. "As part of our school's curriculum, third-year primary students are supposed to learn about various dinosaurs as well as the field of paleontology."

Her two-and-a-half-week unit began with two in-class readings of a library book, "Digging Up Dinosaurs," that described occupations associated with paleontology and explained how fossils are formed. Students next toured dinosaur sites on the Internet (see list, next page) and viewed the Discovery Channel video "Walking with Dinosaurs."

Students studied dinosaurs' sizes, habits and geographic habitats. They drew pictures of dinosaurs and visualized their size by lining up on the school parking lot. They made a paper model of a Stegosaurus and named her Stella.

To integrate the unit with mathematics and social studies, students graphed the lengths of different kinds of dinosaurs and charted where in the United States their fossils have been found.

They even went on a dinosaur egg hunt. Hawkins made the eggs (see "Recipe") and hid them on the school grounds. The students assumed the role of carnivores — meat eaters — looking for eggs to eat. They hunted in teams for protection against the Godzilla of dinosaurs, the Tyrannosaurus Rex, dramatically portrayed by Hawkins herself.

When Hawkins needed a culminating activity for the unit, the Chickenosaurus idea was born. "I wanted my students to get a feel for



Pecking students
"Chickenosaurus"

an archeology dig," the first-year teacher said, "and I wanted the experience to be as realistic as possible."

Hawkins knew of no dinosaur fossils near Hodgenville, so she created her own fossils of the "dinosaur" Chickenosaurus.

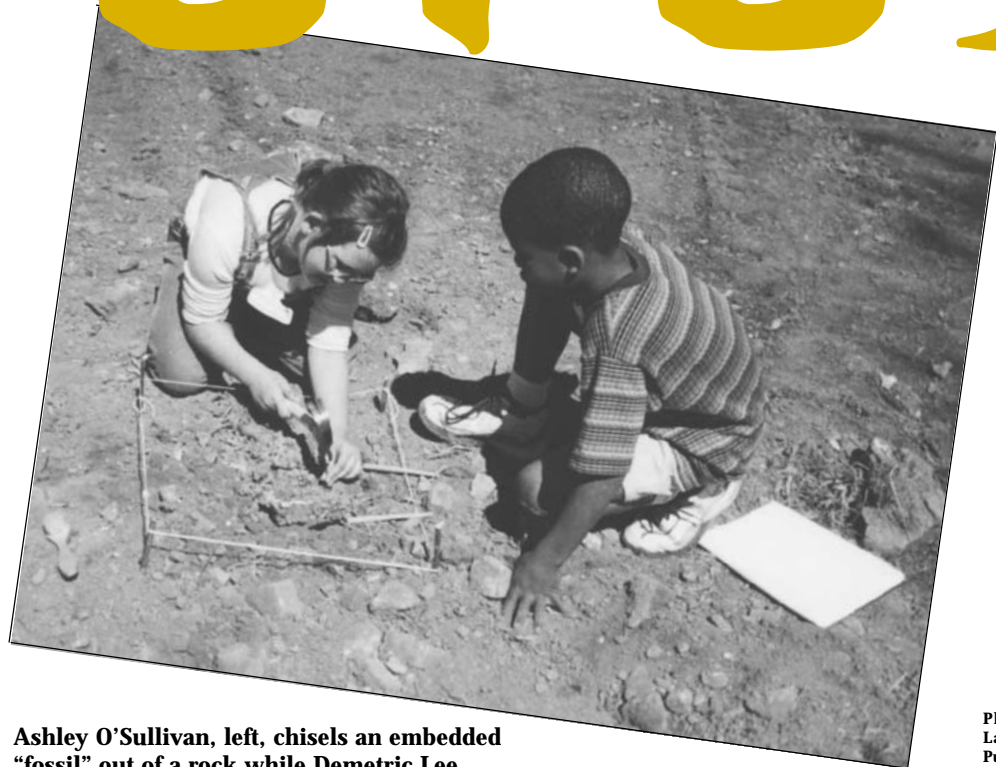
"The hardest part was eating several family packs of chicken so I could get enough bones," Hawkins laughed. She pulled from the bones whatever meat remained after dinner, then prepared the "fossils" by layering rock and soil in plastic containers until they were half full. She then placed chicken bones in the center of each container and poured in a small amount of plaster of Paris. She covered the "fossil" with more rock and soil, then let it set for 48 hours.

During a time when her students were with another teacher, Hawkins took a shovel and pick to a field behind the school and buried four Chickenosaurus fossils.

OSAURUS



away with hammer and "chisel," Rebecca Hawkins modeled how her inched through plaster of Paris to find remnants of the osaurus."



Ashley O'Sullivan, left, chisels an embedded "fossil" out of a rock while Demetric Lee assists and prepares to trace the bone's size on the paper behind him.

Photos courtesy
LaRue County
Public Schools

When the time came for the students to dig, Hawkins told them they were to search for fossils of the Chickenosaurus, a creature thought to have disappeared about 65 million years ago. She cautioned that they weren't assured of finding a fossil but were to look in the most promising sites. Recent bulldozing in the area meant students had few visual clues to the sites where Hawkins had dug holes and filled them in again.

Armed with miniature rakes and hoes Hawkins had purchased at a local dollar store, and with suntan lotion that all good paleontologists use when working in the hot sun, teams of students began their dig. Upon finding each bone, students measured it, traced its dimensions onto drawing paper and logged its location. None of the sites contained a complete skeleton, so Hawkins asked the students to project and draw what they thought their Chickenosaurus had looked like

when alive.

"At very little cost, I was able to give the students the experience of actually digging for dinosaur bones while they studied about them," she said. "Even the reluctant learners became active participants."

As a bonus, the students digging for the Chickenosaurus uncovered some rocks that contained real seaweed fossils.

"Digging Up Dinosaurs" (ISBN 0-06-445078-3) by Aliki Brandenburg was published by Harper-Collins, New York, in 1988. For details about the Chickenosaurus project, contact Rebecca Hawkins at (270) 358-3506 or rhawkins@larue.k12.ky.us

**Rebecca Hawkins'
Recipe for Dinosaur Eggs**

- Mix coffee grounds, water, flour and sand to form dough.
- Wrap lumps of dough around toy dinosaurs; mold each lump into the shape of an oversized egg.
- Bake the eggs at 350 degrees until they harden.

Dinosaurs on the Internet

- www.mysteries-megasite.com/main/bigsearch/dino-1.html (Scroll down past the top screen.)
- www.dinosaur-museum.org
- www.ucmp.berkeley.edu
- www.dinosaurweb.com



Oldham County Middle has one focus: Improvement

A combination of vision, planning, attention to detail and creativity has vaulted the school into the ranks of the state's top 10 middle schools in academic performance.

By Jim Parks
Kentucky Department of Education

Editor's Note: April 11, 2000, was the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Kentucky Education Reform Act. To mark the occasion, the Kentucky Department of Education published a comprehensive report, "Results Matter: A Decade of Difference in Kentucky's Public Schools." Oldham County Middle is one of 12 schools profiled in that report. These 12 schools are examples of successes happening in many schools - and inspiration for schools still looking for the keys to future success.

When homework is missing at Oldham County Middle School, the teacher is likely to pick up the cordless phone in the classroom, summon the student, walk into the hall and call a parent, usually at work. If there's a misunderstanding, it gets settled right there in the hall, on the cordless phone. The teacher, the student and the parent get back on the same page together.

When a student falls behind in a class, the student stays after school on Wednesdays and Thursdays with the teacher of that class to get extra help.

Every test in 8th-grade mathematics covers everything that has been presented from the first of the year, not just the concepts taught in the past few weeks.

When the 6th-grade social studies teacher gives a geography test on landforms, the students receive Play-Doh and test questions that require them to make a mesa, mold a mountain or create a plateau. The test becomes a memorable learning experience.

A few years ago, Oldham Middle had a pre-algebra class for a few promising 8th-graders. Now the 8th-grade mathematics curriculum is algebra for those who are ready and pre-algebra for everyone else. How could the

school make this change? Partly because, says Principal Shirley Lauterbach, students arriving from the elementary schools are better prepared these days.

A few short years ago, the Oldham County district decided to make competence in computer technology - keyboarding, word processing, spread sheets, power point presentations, database skills - a requirement for high school graduation. Now students learn those skills in middle school, and the district is talking about making those competencies an exit standard for 8th-graders.

Lauterbach tries to plan with her faculty and school council two or three years in advance. Last year, though, Superintendent Blake Haselton asked administrators to write about their visions of education in the future. What are schools and students and families and their sources of information going to be like in the year 2020, and what do we need to be doing now to be ready?

The combination of vision, planning, attention to detail and creativity has vaulted the school into the ranks of the state's top 10 middle schools in academic performance. Its mathematics score for 1999 is only 3 points shy of the 2014 goal of 100.

Oldham County Middle School is appropriately named. It is in the middle of Oldham County, at Buckner, just a mile and a half from the entrance to the LaGrange Reformatory, one of Kentucky's oldest state prisons. The most prominent buildings in the area are small factories made of fabricated steel along the railroad track that connects Louisville and Cincinnati. Eighteen percent of the school's students qualify for lunch subsidies, and 15

percent have disabilities.

Oldham County Middle's climb to the top began a year before enactment of the Kentucky Education Reform Act. It started with a schoolwide emphasis on study skills and the use of open-response questions on tests.

"We did a school transformation plan long before we were required to," said Lauterbach, who has been at the school for 24 years as teacher, assistant principal and principal. That plan focused the school's efforts on reading. Even though the school has had formal school-based decision making for only a couple of years, shared leadership has been part of the school's style for years. The school has systematically focused on the state core content and learning goals.

"We have a really focused teach-

ing staff," Lauterbach said. "The attitude here is, 'What can we do to get better?'"

The print edition of "Results Matter: A Decade of Difference in Kentucky's Public Schools" is available for \$15 per copy. To order, phone Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421; send e-mail to wnewton@kde.state.ky.us; or write to the Department of Education Bookstore, 19th Floor, Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601. To order online, go to www.kde.state.ky.us/comm/pubinfo/bookstore/ (click "Browse and Order Online," then "Education Reform.") The report is available free of charge on the Internet at www.kde.state.ky.us/resultsmatter.



A larger-than-life praying mantis seems to watch as Ashley Rymes walks to science class at Oldham County Middle School. The mural displays insects painted to scale. (Top of page) Jevon Winburn reads a model of a short story before writing her own.

Photos by Rick McComb

Eddie Price sends students back through time to learn today's social studies lessons

By Sharon Crouch Farmer
Kentucky Department of Education

What do peer teaching units, time travel and baking a cake have in common?

They are strategies that Eddie Price uses in his Hancock County High School social studies classrooms.

"I am always looking for new strategies to encourage students to learn in different ways," Price said. "I believe that if students feel ownership in their learning, it becomes far more meaningful to them." Price provides input and guidance for student-directed learning that requires research and uses technology.

One such project involves "time travel" adventures. Students develop roles for themselves in the environment of a specific era, country and event. From there, they write their own epic adventures. Their tales must include conversations with famous people, the preparation of local foods, descriptions of clothing and accounts of their own participation in events.

"Some students have attended a Shakespearean play as Elizabeth's consort or fought in the battle of Marston Moor in the English civil war," Price said. "A few sailed with Columbus, and one served as an executioner in Revolutionary France."

Price grades the fictional accounts, basing his judgments on historical accuracy, attention to detail and creativity.

Students in Hancock County High School's world civilization class write

poems based on historical characters, places or events from the era the class is studying. Price determines guidelines that students must follow, focusing on technical information and how it is arranged to rhyme. Students compile as much information as they can and organize it into an outline that they discuss with Price. "I make sure they include important information and that they understand the subject's contri-

use by other teachers:

- 50 percent technical merit: The poem must include at least 16 lines of relative historical information and provide a complete, detailed description of the subject.

- 10 percent rhyming: The poem must rhyme.

- 10 percent relevancy/authenticity: Students must use valid, specific terms related to the subject.

poetic technique, the assignment has the potential for producing proficient portfolio writing," Chandler said.

Price, who has studied several writing methods, compares the process to an experience with which his students can identify: baking a cake. "If I told students they could bake a cake for extra credit, I would not give them a grade for bringing in the ingredients individually," Price said. "The ingredients would have to blend into a tasteful whole, and it would take time to do it properly."

In Price's classes, peer teaching units are required events. He divides students into groups of four or five and assigns each group a country and era. The student groups then develop units on their topics and teach those units to their peers. Their teaching presentations must include period dress, music, foods, artistic displays and a dramatic skit. Price encourages his students to get parents involved in helping with costumes and food. Many parents attend on the

days their children teach.

"I've found that parents become more readily involved when we connect the classroom with their world," said Price.

To learn more about Price's teaching strategies, contact him at Hancock County High School, (270) 927-6953, or send e-mail to him through the KETS global listing or at epprice@hancock.k12.ky.us.



Photo by Rick McComb

Teacher Eddie Price talks with students Trina Estes (left) and Megan Gaynor about their presentation on the American West. Price teaches social studies by having students write historically accurate, detailed accounts of events as if they had been involved in them.

bution to the historical era," Price said.

From the outline, students jot down important terms, searching for words that rhyme and words that will connect the overall theme, and begin writing. "They use the dictionary and thesaurus a lot," said Price. "It's an excellent vocabulary builder and requires a lot of thought." The project culminates in student presentations of their poems before the class.

Price shares this scoring rubric for

- 30 percent artistic merit/creativity: The poem must capture the mood of the subject. Flow, meter, stanza length, rich verbs and adjectives, and vocabulary integration are considered in the final analysis of the poem.

Robin Chandler, Kentucky Department of Education social studies consultant, considers the poetry writing activity a wonderful way to use writing to demonstrate learning. "As students are allowed more freedom with

Alternative school students learn 'can do' lessons by scaling stone walls

By Harold "Doc" Arnett
Scott County Alternative High School

When DeLana first came to the alternative school, I knew we had a tough job ahead. Clinically diagnosed as school phobic, she couldn't even bring herself to walk into a classroom. She was quiet to the point of introversion and seemed downright scared.

Seven months later, she was teasing staff members and other students — and I was wondering if we had "overachieved" in regard to her change of personality.

One of the key events in DeLana's metamorphosis did not happen in the classroom or the counselor's office. It happened at the end of a rope.

Traditional classroom experiences don't address the best talents of some students. Considering that and knowing that overcoming a challenge often has multiple benefits, Scott County Alternative School tried a different path

to success: indoor rock climbing. Unless you and your anchoring partner forget a few basic instructions, climbing builds confidence, trust and cooperation. Group competitions build teamwork. Every climb

requires problem solving as you figure out a route — which holds you can use and which ones you can't. Climbing is an exceptional builder of strength and stamina as well.

The routes at Climb Time, an indoor climbing facility in Lexington, vary from the simple — stuff that even old fogies like me can do — to complex climbs that require strength, agility and technical skill usually possessed only by experienced climbers.

Unless you're like Dustin. Watch-

ing Dustin during his first visit to Climb Time, I was reminded of Mozart! I've

heard that Mozart first saw a piano when he was about 10 years old. After staring at the keyboard for a few

minutes, he sat down and started playing. Not plinking, *playing*. When asked to explain how he could play so well so soon, he answered, "I looked at the keyboard and it just made sense to me."

Apparently, staring at the holds and the inverted slope of the climbing routes "made sense" to Dustin. Instinctively he made smooth, complex maneuvers as if he had been climbing rocks for years. He climbed every route in the place except the one with 30 feet of horizontal underhang. He probably would have done that one if he'd been allowed to try. He repeatedly climbed the roped routes and the bouldering routes, those climbed without a rope but with a thick pad below. At the end of his first visit, he was our school's undisputed king of climbing.

In the classroom, Dustin never stood out. He was well mannered and polite and made decent grades, but he never stood out. The climbing facility set up a situation and an opportunity for a student who is normally just a nice, average kid to demonstrate exceptional talent. It gave everybody at school a chance to see that. Probably the most important thing is that it gave Dustin the chance to see it. We could have gone the whole year without knowing — and he

One of the key events in DeLana's metamorphosis did not happen in the classroom or the counselor's office. It happened at the end of a rope.

would have never known — that he is so talented at this.

For Dustin, the chance to be better than most at something made the trip special. For others, the significance was in simply participating.

As expected, DeLana was terrified at the idea of climbing a vertical wall 20 feet tall with nothing but a skinny rope between her and a fractured neck. The first and most important part of the Climb Time experience is belay training. This training teaches students how to manage the safety rope attached to the climber's harness. The belayer is responsible for the climber's safety, determining if the climber experiences nothing more than an unpleasant jerk or a fall that could lead to serious and even fatal injuries.

During belay training, DeLana inched her way up no farther than 10 feet before she froze. She had to peel herself from the rock to let her belay partner lower her back to the ground. After the training, she spent the next 30 minutes swearing she would never get back up there.

After watching the others and getting a strong dose of encouragement from Barry, the Climb Time owner/manager who is terrific at working with teens, DeLana tried again. She froze part of the way up but listened to the shouts of staff and students from below: "You can do it. Go on!" She went on.

In a few minutes, the girl who dreaded the idea of being in any group, who took months to overcome her fear of being in a new school, who would rather do almost anything rather than walk into a classroom, *this girl* was hanging on the face of a vertical wall, 20 feet above the floor and yelling at the top of her voice, "Hey, Dr. Arnett, look at me!"

For more information, contact Harold "Doc" Arnett, principal of Scott County Alternative High, at (502) 863-4057 or by e-mail through the KETS global list or harnett@scott.k12.ky.us.



Photo by Rick McComb

Melinda Wainscott belays — manages the safety rope — as Daniel Bolton starts up a wall at an indoor climbing facility in Lexington. Scott County Alternative School offers the activity to help students build confidence and trust and learn to solve problems individually and in teams.

New types of teaching certificates proposed

Several new teaching certificate options could be available to Kentucky teachers as the result of an amendment proposed by the Education Professional Standards Board.

Changes in the types of certificates Kentucky offers would most affect individuals seeking to gain initial teacher certification in the commonwealth. Current classroom teachers would be affected by the changes only if they seek additional certification in new teaching areas. The proposed regulation would go into effect in the fall of 2001.

"With the implementation of education reform 10 years ago, the board was mandated to streamline Kentucky's certification process and

reduce the number of certificate types, which numbered more than 150," said Mary Ellen Wiederwohl, the board's Director of Legislative and Public Relations. After significantly reducing the types of certificates Kentucky awards, the board is now looking to see if some of the interdisciplinary certificates adopted since 1990 are too broad. "The proposed certificates are better aligned to core content and will help districts more easily identify teachers to fill vacant positions," Wiederwohl said.

With support from education stakeholders, the board proposes new base certificates for science (grades 8-12), middle school (5-9) and music (P-12). The base certificate is a stand-alone license to teach. It encompasses authorization to teach introductory and

interdisciplinary courses in related fields.

New restricted base certificates, specifying the subject or area of certification that can be taught, would be available for psychology (8-12), sociology (8-12), journalism (8-12), speech/media communications (8-12), theater (P-12), dance (P-12), computer information systems (P-12) and English as a second language (P-12). A restricted base certificate is also a stand-alone license to teach, but it encompasses a much more narrow and specific range of expertise.

New certificate endorsements are being proposed for instructional computer technology (P-12). Grade range changes would be made for computer

science (8-12) and driver education (8-12). Endorsements would also be available for school safety (P-12) and school nutrition (P-12). Certificate endorsements are awarded as an addition to a base or restricted base certificate upon completion of an endorsement program.

The first public hearing on the amendment to 704 KAR 20:670 will be at 1 p.m. on Oct. 24 at the Council on Postsecondary Education's conference room, 1024 Capital Center Dr., Frankfort. Several other opportunities for public comment will occur during the regulation amendment process. For more information, contact Wiederwohl at (502) 573-4606, ext. 224, or by e-mail at mwiederw@kde.state.ky.us.



Photo by Rick McComb

DIGGIN' IT— Jay Stottman (far left) of the Kentucky Archaeology Survey explains how to interpret findings at an excavation site in Frankfort. Teachers from eight school districts participated in the one-day workshop hosted by the Kentucky Historical Society. The Kentucky Archaeology Survey sponsors such workshops to help teachers make hands-on connections between archaeology and core content. For more information, contact Gwynn Henderson at (859) 257-1919 or aghend@pop.uky.edu.

Grants boost access to advanced classes

Thanks to a three-year, \$1.1 million federal grant, the Department of Education is helping Kentucky high schools increase access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses for low-income and minority students.

Ten high schools are receiving funds this school year to help teachers deliver AP courses and strengthen curriculum and instruction leading to AP courses. The schools are Graves County, Metcalfe County, Shawnee (Jefferson County), Spencer County, Mercer County, Estill County, Bracken County, Jackson City, Buckhorn (Perry County) and Owsley County.

The 10 schools will serve as mentors to at least eight schools in the second year and at least 16 in the third year of the program.

"This grant will benefit many Kentucky high school students," said Renee Murray, Special Projects Branch manager for the department. "We know that some high schools can't offer enough AP courses to meet the requirements for the Commonwealth Diploma. This funding will provide professional development for teachers, give students greater access to those upper-level courses and help prepare them for success in the AP program."

The funds also support expanded offerings and services through the Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS), which offers 10 AP courses this fall. Scholarships will help pay the KVHS course and AP exam fees for eligible students to earn a total of 100 AP course credits statewide per year during the three-year funding cycle.

In addition, the grant funds middle school foreign language teacher academies, professional development and statewide and regional meetings.

The Commonwealth Diploma Program encourages Kentucky's high school students to take demanding and rigorous courses that prepare them for college. The Advanced Placement Program permits students throughout the nation to receive college credit for advanced courses while still in high school. Advanced Placement courses and examinations are administered by The College Board, a national, nonprofit association of 3,800 educational organizations dedicated to preparing, inspiring and connecting students to college and opportunity. In addition to the Advanced Placement Program, The College Board sponsors the SAT, PSAT/NMSQT and Pacesetter programs.

For more information, contact Renee Murray at (502) 564-2106 or rlmurray@kde.state.ky.us.

50 schools expand school safety project

Fifty Kentucky elementary and middle schools are working to create more positive, safe and supportive learning environments for both staff and students as Kentucky Instructional Discipline and Support (KIDS) schools.

KIDS is an expansion of the Kentucky Behavior Initiative Model Schools Project, launched three years ago at eight elementary and middle school pilot sites. The experience at those schools demonstrated that these critical elements determine the success of schools that adopt this model:

1. active administrative leadership, participation and continuity;
2. district commitment to the project, including support of extensive professional development and substitutes required for training;
3. representative team membership;
4. faculty involvement and commitment at 75 percent or higher;
5. school belief in the value of a proactive instructional approach to discipline;
6. use of school-based professional development days to educate and involve all staff.

Data collected during the initial pilot consistently demonstrates significant reductions in classroom behavior problems, office referrals, in-school and after-school detentions, and student suspension and expulsion rates in schools where the model was sub-

stantially implemented. The Kentucky Center for School Safety advocates this model's multi-level approach as a framework for safe schools planning.

The 50 KIDS schools will receive two to three years of intensive training and technical support to implement schoolwide positive instructional strategies. The support will come from the Kentucky Department of Education and the Center for School Safety.

"The goal," said Doris Settles, the center's clearinghouse coordinator, "is to build a statewide network of schools that deal effectively with student behavior and discipline and demonstrate the value of proactive schoolwide approaches and multi-level intervention models that are research-based and prevention-oriented."

The 50 schools will eventually assist other schools in planning and implementing instructional approaches to school safety.

KIDS is one of several proactive, schoolwide intervention models. The Center for School Safety offers a variety of workshops, including these:

- School Administrator's Guide to the Beginning of the School Year;
- Dealing with Chronic Referrals;
- Behavior Management Strategies.

A list of training events is available online at www.kysafeschools.org or from the center's training coordinator, Kerri Schelling, at (877) 805-4277.



AUTUMN MIST — Amy New (left) and Ashley Sutherland pause to enjoy one of the first crisp and foggy days of fall. The students were taking a break between classes at Carroll County Area Technology Center.

Photo by Rick McComb



Event to feature strategies for school-community relations

This year's fall conference of the Kentucky School Public Relations Association (KYSPRA) will be Nov. 2 and 3 at the Executive West Hotel in Louisville. The conference will feature sessions on basic and advanced strategies schools and districts can use to communicate their messages effectively.

The agenda includes sessions geared to these skills:

- designing eye-catching publications;
- writing copy people want to read;
- taking photos that tell the story;
- developing a Web site that attracts visitors;
- working with national media;
- bringing joy to the work place;
- learning from other participants' successes and challenges.

Featured speakers will include Dick Thornton, president of the National School Public Relations Association, speaking during lunch on Nov. 2; and Gene Wilhoit, Kentucky's commissioner of education, speaking at the annual OASIS awards luncheon on Nov. 3.

For fee and registration information, phone Jeff Phillips at (606) 573-4330, or send e-mail to jphillips@harlan.k12.ky.us.

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THE Bulletin Board

By Lisa York Gross
Kentucky Department of Education

Open-response items available directly from ARSI

The University of Kentucky's Appalachian Rural Systemic Initiative (ARSI) is now your source for manuals of open-response items from state assessments in science and mathematics. Six manuals (elementary math, elementary science, middle school math, middle school science, high school math, high school science) include released test questions, an open-response design checklist, a rubric design checklist and a table of contents that aligns the questions to Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment.

The manuals, developed by the ARSI Resource Collaborative Office, cost \$13.50 each, payable by check or purchase order. Request an order form from Jennifer Lemmings, ARSI Office, University of Kentucky, 641 S. Limestone Ave., Lexington, KY 40506-0333; phone (859) 257-4836; fax (859) 257-5640; e-mail jalemm0@pop.uky.edu.

ESL conference coming to Lexington

The Kentucky Department for Adult Education and Literacy and the Kentucky Department of Education will host the English as a Second Language (ESL) conference set for Nov. 1-3 in Lexington. The event will include presentations for educators from preschool through adulthood. The keynote speaker will be Miriam Met of Virginia, an international speaker on ESL and foreign language issues.

Participants may register in advance or on site. For more information and a registration brochure, call Annie Rooney French at (502) 564-7056 or e-mail her at esl2000@kde.state.ky.us.

Learn about Japan through International Teacher Program

The Toyota International Teacher Program will select a total of 50 teachers from six states, including Kentucky, to go to Japan June 21 - July 6, 2001, to learn about the country's history, education, environment and technology and how these affect industry and society.

Full-time secondary teachers with at least three years of teaching experience may apply by Jan. 8, 2001. Applications are available online at www.iie.org/pgms/toyota.

For more information or printed application forms, contact Toyota International Teacher Program, Institute of International Education, 1400 K St. NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20005-2403; (877) TEACHJP; toyotateach@iie.org.

Art Education Association to host annual conference

The Kentucky Art Education Association (KAEA) will hold this year's conference on Nov. 10 and 11 at Maysville Community College. The event will feature professional development opportunities and arts education experiences for art teachers and professors at all levels, museum education representatives, retired art teachers, art education majors, arts and humanities teachers, and classroom teachers.

Participants may register on site on the first day of the conference. For registration information, visit the KAEA Web site at home1.gte.net/res00fbl/index.htm.

For details, contact Julie Alsip Bucknam, KAEA Conference Coordinator, 521 Lancaster Ave., 309 Campbell Bldg., EKU, Richmond, KY 40475; (859) 622-1637; elebuckn@acs.uky.edu.

National conference will spotlight Kentucky's education reform

"The National Conference on Kentucky's Education Reform: The First Ten Years" is set for Dec. 7-9 at the Galt House in Louisville. Researchers and other experts will discuss lessons learned from Kentucky's initiatives and future opportunities for improving K-12 education. This is a conference for researchers, policymakers and educators interested in education reform and the Kentucky experience.

The conference fee is \$295 (\$345 after Nov. 5). Sponsors are the Kentucky Institute for Education Research, the Appalachian Educational Laboratory and the Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

For more information, call (859) 257-3929 or send e-mail to kmckin2@uky.edu. Registration information also is available online at www.uky.edu/AuxServ/kier.htm.

Military Mail program gearing up

Through the Christmas 2000 Military Mail Campaign, students can write letters to members of the U.S. armed forces stationed throughout the world. Teachers may integrate the program into a variety of grade levels and content areas, including English/language arts, social studies, geography, keyboarding/word processing, letter writing and reading. For more information, visit www.militarymail.org/schools.htm or write to Friends of Our Troops, PO Box 65408, Fayetteville, NC 28306.

Kentucky Teacher

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Commissioner of Education Gene Wilhoit

Associate Commissioner Hunt Helm
for Communications

Director Armando Arrastia
Division of Public Information

Editor Fran Salyers

Copy Writers Sharon Crouch Farmer
Faun S. Fishback
Lisa York Gross

Photographer Rick McComb

Graphics and Design Susie Morrow, Manager
Bill Davis
Michael Gray

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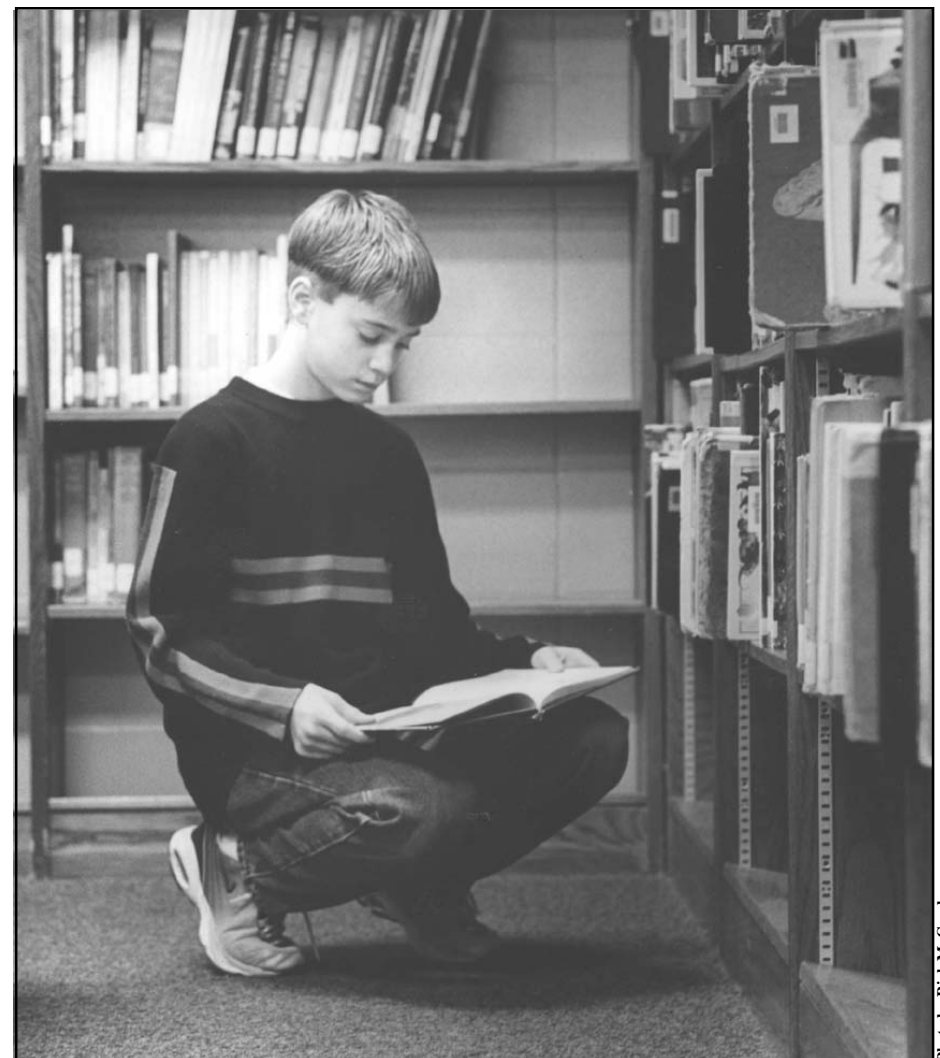


Photo by Rick McComb

BOOKIN' IT — Sixth-grader Ben Sullivan does research on natural gas and oil during a project at Oldham County Middle School. His school is among Kentucky's top 10 middle schools in academic performance. To find out why, see Page 10.

For years, Kentucky teachers have been asking for a way to make students more accountable for how they perform on state-required assessments. A new proposal would use results on the Kentucky Core Content Tests and the writing portfolios to supplement grade point averages for high school students. For details, see Page 1.



Kentucky Department of Education Gene Wilhoit, Commissioner
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